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STEEL ALWAYS COMES THROUGH

By Ernest T. Weir

We are again in a situation in which the distribution of steel is no longer a matter between producers and consumers. Washington now controls the distribution of almost one-half of the total steel produced. It is predicted that this control will extend to perhaps 75 per cent of the total. Of course, allocations now apply in a very uneven manner to the various steel products, and in this respect it is likely that we will see considerable fluctuation from time to time. In view of this condition, any attempt to give a detailed estimate of future steel supply would be sheer speculation. No one knows what the future will bring.

To meet the situation, the steel industry has set itself to the task of building additional capacity to raise over-all steel production to the point where it will cover any demand that may be reasonably expected. This task is by no means a new one. It is merely a stepping-up of the expansion that has been constant throughout the history of the steel industry. Steel has always built well ahead of demand -- not just average demand but peak demand. The period from the beginning of the last war to the present time is the only one in which the steel industry has ever been called upon for all the steel it could produce. I have never before seen any real shortage of steel. In fact, in most years, steel operations were considerably below capacity. As recently as 1938, for instance, operations were only about 40 per cent of capacity.

The war situation really began to develop in 1940. During the war, of course, a great percentage of the total steel produced went for strictly war purposes. The production of many civilian goods was drastically restricted or discontinued entirely. As a result, by the end of the war a huge, abnormal demand had built up for goods of all kinds. It was only natural that there would be shortages. Because steel is an important material or the principal material in so many modern products, the steel industry was placed under a spotlight, and it was criticized for shortages of everything from bobby pins to automobiles. This criticism was entirely unwarranted not only for the reason that the cause of the shortages was completely beyond the control of the steel industry, but

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also because of the truly remarkable job done by the steel industry in providing increasing quantities of steel to overcome the shortages.

II

In fact, the industry never stopped building even during the war. In 1940, the industry had a capacity of 81,600,000 tons. By 1946, this had grown to 91,890,000 ingot tons. From 1946 to January 1, 1951, the industry added over 12 million tons, bringing the total to about 104 million tons. And it now has in progress construction programs that will add still another 13 or 14 million tons -- all of which will be in operation by the early part of 1953. At that time -- in 1953 -- this country will have an ingot capacity of about 118 million tons of steel -- an increase of more than 36 million tons, or 45 per cent over 1940. The effect of the tremendous steel expansion is showing up in the production figures. We are now turning out more than two million tons of steel each week, and if this rate can be maintained, we will end the year with a total production of more than 104 million tons.

The year of peak production during the last war was 1943. In that year, the military requirements for steel were around 23 million tons of finished steel -- 38 per cent of the total. It is unlikely that in the present situation the military requirements will reach the proportions of all-out war -- particularly since many naval and merchant ships, weapons and installations of all kinds that required large tonnages of steel are still in service. Unless we should have the misfortune of a full-scale war, with the additions already made to steel capacity and those yet to come, it is very difficult to see how there can be any genuine shortage of steel for any great length of time. If any shortages develop, the key factors will be lack of other critical materials and lack of manpower.

III

From the fact that it is stated so glibly from time to time that this country should have such and such steel capacity -- the precise figure depending on the opinion of the speaker of the moment -- you would get the idea that the expansion of steel capacity is a simple and easy matter. The easy expansionists reason that, given manpower, only space and equipment are necessary to reach any given production goal. But, the really tough problem is overlooked: the facilities necessary to make the raw material -- the primary steel.

To do this, we must first find and develop basic materials -- the coal, limestone and, particularly, the iron ore. Then we must provide facilities to transport and handle these raw materials at the rate of

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four tons for every ton of finished steel we ship. After that, we must build coke ovens, blast furnaces, bessemers, open-hearth furnaces, soaking pits and blooming mills, as well as many auxiliary facilities. It is this preliminary part of steel expansion which is the big job and involves the big cost.

For the steel industry as a whole, the investment in expansion from 1940 through 1952 will amount to $6,147 million. For National Steel Corporation alone, investment during the same period will be $375 million. And I want to point out that practically all of this huge investment in the steel industry represents private capital -- with help neither asked from nor given by the Government.

While on this matter of investment, I would like to say that the financial situation of the steel industry cannot be considered at all satisfactory. This statement may be surprising in view of the reports of steel company earnings in the financial pages. But, unfortunately, part of what you read is fiction. The earnings of steel companies -- our own included -- do not tell the whole story. This is due to the method of taking depreciation resulting from the government policy to allow tax deductions for depreciation on the basis of original cost only. Yet the cost of plant and equipment has advanced at least two and a half times over prewar. All property must be replaced on this higher cost basis. Where is the money to come from? It is perfectly proper to expect that new money will cover a portion of the total financing required for new construction. But you cannot expect new money to replace existing facilities, and it will not be forthcoming. There is only one source of money for replacement. It must come from proper depreciation charges. The earnings shown today are misleading to the very substantial extent that they include money that should be charged to depreciation, because it must be spent for replacement and therefore is not available for any other purpose. If this factor were properly recognized, real figures of earnings would drop to a point which would show that steel prices today are not commensurate with the real costs of investment and operation.

IV

I referred to the difficulties faced by steel companies in maintaining adequate reserves of raw materials -- and particularly iron ore. Always until the present time, there has been an ample supply of iron ore in this country. It presented no great problem. Now the picture is entirely different. At the very time that we are expanding steel capacity to such a tremendous extent, we must provide against exhaustion of the rich Lake Superior ores which have been the backbone of American

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steel production for more than 60 years. These ores will not be depleted this year or next year. But the enormous and continuing drain from the beginning of the last war to the present time is bringing the day uncomfortably close.

No steel company can take chances with iron ore. It must see that it has reserves for many years ahead -- and even 50 years is not too far ahead -- because you cannot produce steel unless you have the raw materials. The search for ore is taking two main routes: First, progress is being made in the development of methods for working taconite -- a low grade, hard rock ore which has been considered an uneconomic source heretofore but which holds the potential of a very large supply of ore within the United States. Second -- and presently more important -- we are looking the world over for new reserves of high grade ore.

You have read of the discovery and development of ore in Venezuela, Africa and Labrador. The Labrador project -- in which National Steel is largely interested -- is being carried forward actively with a program that involves the present spending of $200 million and eventually will run into many millions more. This development will require not only the usual mining installations, but also living quarters for employees, a 365-mile railroad, docking and loading facilities, and the construction of large ocean-going ships for the transportation of iron ore. The Labrador field is expected to ship its first ore in 1955. This is a good illustration of the long-range preparations that are essential to steel production and of the necessity to acquire and develop costly property years before there can be any possible return from it. It costs a lot of money each year to carry these necessary reserves of raw materials.

The great immediate need of the industry is for a substantial increase in the supply of iron and steel scrap. An inventory of 60 days is considered normal. The industry average is down to 21 days; some individual companies are virtually on a day-to-day basis. Manufacturing industry can help ease this crisis by collecting every possible pound of scrap and moving it through normal channels to the steel furnaces.

The steel industry has a great historical record of always taking care of the demand for steel -- of always building in advance of demand. Even now, despite the interference of war and the great dislocation of our domestic economy, it is living up to that record. It will continue to do so. It is a great industry with a great record.

Mr. Ernest T. Weir is Chairman of the National Steel Corporation.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events Vol. VIII, No. 34

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By Frank C. Hanighen August 22, 1951

EISENHOWER BOOM: In the free market -- preposterously free -- of political sales talk in Washington today, the stock of Eisenhower has conspicuously sagged. The drop has led analysts to debate whether this represents merely a "technical", temporary reaction, or the beginning of a long decline.

(No serious observer here takes too seriously political forecasts today; it's a long time until national conventions start. But there does exist -- all observers agree -- a remarkable public curiosity about the presidential race to come; and this unusual public interest has stimulated political discussion.)

Factors which may produce -- may already be producing -- a decline are:

(1) One reason for the current slide is the bumptious and rather immature cynicism of the arguments. When the objection is raised -- that Ike is a notoriously bad administrator and that the War Department was never more badly run than when he was Chief of Staff -- the boosters cheerfully admit the charge. But they add: "We'll provide the boys to take care of that for him." The implication of "we'll run him" is one conspicuous characteristic of the private sales talk. In this town, where many recall how the Alger Hisses and Harry D. Whites ran their official superiors, this argument isn't exactly reassuring.

(2) The fact that the leader of the pro-Eisenhower publicity team is George Allen hardly constitutes an asset. Allen still bears the label, "The Court Jester".

(3) Those who have memories running back to 1948 shy at the proposition, announced as if it were startlingly original, "We have to have a man who can win." It is not yet forgotten that the same argument was used by the Dewey boosters in 1944 and 1948. Today some of the very same individuals who peddled this line before are now monotonously repeating it. In other parts of the nation, it may prove persuasive; in the Capital, it runs into sales resistance.

Indeed, one of the interesting traits of pro-Eisenhower talk is that the salesmen, in private, rarely express enthusiasm about Eisenhower himself, but pitch their harangues to the tune of "we need him to win".

(4) Not the least of the doubts about Ike arise from an ingrained feeling (rather than any specific knowledge) that if the General should be the GOP candidate, the Administration would discredit him by a devastating smear campaign. Here, in Washington, there prevails a strong respect for the ability of this huge, well-financed Administration (with secret files available only on a highly selective basis) to "do a job" on anyone whose reputation they wish to destroy. Whether or not the Administration could, or would, adopt such means against Ike is less important presently than the conviction that it might well do so.

(5) Finally, in the last few days, pressrooms and political corners of bars are abuzz with talk about the prominent piece in last Sunday's New York Times by Luther Huston, of the Times Washington bureau, entitled "No Eisenhower Boom for Middle West GOP". After a trip across the Appalachians, Mr. Huston came back to tell the East and particularly Washington (which badly needs such reporting) that GOP leaders in the Middle West do not take the Ike boom seriously. But, warns Huston, an organized opposition (to Eisenhower) would "quite likely" develop if the Eisenhower boom should become "formidable". At present, according to Huston, GOP political leaders in that area are for Taft; and a number of racial groups and prejudices are aligned against the General.

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Since the Times has hitherto shown a rather benign attitude towards the General's political prospects, this reportage by one of its own staff has made no little impression here.

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DEMOCRATIC POLITICS: Vice President Barkley, in an interview published in the U.S. News this week, said he is opposed to the restoration of the two-thirds rule for presidential nominations at Democratic conventions. This statement is regarded, by political observers, as important and significant.

It is important because Barkley thereby turns his back to the South. Southern Democrats have always, since the abolition of the two-thirds rule in 1936, wistfully longed for its restoration. Under the rule, for a century, Southern states enjoyed a virtual veto over any candidate for nomination. Senator Byrd recently called for restoration, with widespread approval in the South.

The immediate reaction of observers to the Byrd demand was that the Northern Democrats would never accede. But in recent weeks, there has been no little speculation in the press that perhaps Truman, to avoid a split in the Party, might permit restoration of the rule. Barkley's statement pretty well puts an end to such talk.

What Barkley said is also significant concerning trends in the Democratic party. It is known, even outside the Senate cloakrooms, that the Vice President wants ("almost pathetically", say his Senate friends) to continue in his office. He undoubtedly realizes that there will be strong moves at the Convention to replace him with some other person, for various political reasons. The section of the Party most firmly opposed to restoration of the two-thirds rule is the Left Wing. Therefore, it is argued, behind the Barkley statement lies not only his desire to conciliate the Left Wing, but also, possibly, a belief that the Left Wing will call the tune and shape policies in Chicago a year hence.

The attitude of Left Wing Democrats towards the developing Southern revolt is one of "we can win without the Southerners". There are overtones of this attitude in other parts of the Barkley interview in U.S. News. The Vice President, whatever else his capacities, is a pretty good judge of currents in his Party. The Left Wing undertow is strong. Since the Left Wingers directed and won the campaign for Truman in 1948, it would be only logical that the President entrust the destinies of the Party to them in 1952.

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FOREIGN AID: Despite pleas from Eisenhower, the sentiment on Capitol Hill against foreign aid is developing. This week Senator George said he would try to cut $2 billion from the Administration demands, mostly from economic aid, and even Senator Tom Connally, formerly an obedient follower of State Department plans, allowed there should be a $1 billion cut. Such reductions would be most unhappy news to that Department. George voiced a wide feeling when he remarked about the State Department: "They can find all kinds of reasons to give away money."

But there's an even deeper consideration -- rarely mentioned in the eastern press -- which moves legislators. Many Members of Congress -- we found on a visit to the Hill yesterday -- think that the Administration is demanding high appropriations, not because of any genuine fear of war, but simply as a means to "spend and spend and elect and elect".

This thought has been nourished by the statement of a great public figure -- words which, also, have not found currency in the eastern press. On our rounds on the Hill, we were surprised to hear many members, who voiced the above suspicion of the Administration strategy, refer to or quote the remark of General MacArthur in his Boston speech: "Talk of imminent threat to our national security through the application of external force is pure nonsense."

This judgment of MacArthur may well have outweighed the urgings of the General in Paris. As a matter of fact, even in the House, where the cut in foreign aid funds

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was disappointing to many, Republicans held together far better than anticipated in the various parliamentary battles for reduction. The fact that a number of usually dissident Southern Democrats went along with the Administration is attributed to the clever maneuvers of the popular new Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, James P. Richards of South Carolina.

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PHILOSOPHICALLY SPEAKING: Senator Fulbright (D., Ark.), chairman of the Senate Banking subcommittee that investigated RFC, received much publicity for his proposal that a committee of eminent citizens hold an inquiry into the "moral standards of government". Such an inquiry is destined to be fatuous. Since the government is not a person it cannot have any moral standards. It is, by its nature, amoral.

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THOUGHT CONTROL: One clubwoman, who does not take gracefully "packaged thinking" from the Government, has denounced the closed-door "briefing sessions" by which the State Department seeks to regiment public opinion. Mrs. Madalen D. Leetch, a resident of Washington, D. C., recently appeared before the Senate Appropriations Committee and gave her version of "Operation Goebbels". This column for some years has been revealing facts about this method of Thought Control. Mrs. Leetch, who has attended some of these meetings, as a somewhat recalcitrant guest, offered the Senators an eye-witness account:

"The Public Liaison Department holds 'briefing sessions' for representatives of national organizations. There are large and small meetings, usually assembled by letter, but sometimes by telephone, asking for the 'benefit of your thinking'. Women are suckers for flattery and that's how it's done. Anyway, the sessions are always well attended. Every conceivable type of organization is represented. A pseudo-secrecy is suggested by checking one in at the door and the making of 'off the record' statements occasionally. Vast quantities of printed and duplicated material is distributed, together with Agenda items and attendance lists.

"Every subject under the sun," continued Mrs. Leetch, "is covered, world-wide in scope. It is usually timed to coincide with debates of legislation on the Hill with the attitude that Congress is slightly backward if not wayward in even wanting to discuss, much less dissent. For every problem, social and economic, there is one solution -- government intervention. An opposing view is never presented. . . . These 'briefing sessions' subsidized by the general taxpayers, do pay off. The large women's organizations uncritically support the Government's foreign policy as it is represented by the State Department. A new pyramid of these has just been formed calling itself Assembly of Women's Organizations for National Security, claiming to represent millions of women, and dispensing packaged thinking."

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BOOK FRONT: Just as some independence of Government thought control has commenced to show itself, a drive has apparently been started to put the Government in the book business. The book trade has not been doing well for some time, and quite possibly some publishers are by no means averse to what would be subsidies from the State. Willard Edwards in an article in the Washington Times-Herald on July 20, describes this development.

He finds the tip-off in an article in the Saturday Review of Literature, July 14, by Norman Cousins. This piece forecasts a tie-up between Government and publishers in the issuance and sale of paper-bound reprints of "Classics and Current American Books". The Times-Herald writer remarks that no great mental effort is necessary to realize that this term, "Current American Books" would open wide the door to all kinds of Administration propaganda. As for classics, Cousins expressed regret that libraries in India and Pakistan had "nothing by Howells or James, Thoreau or Melville or Faulkner or Dreiser". The Times-Herald's tart comment on this is that

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books by Thoreau are available from 11 publishers, books by James from 15 publishers, by Melville from 9 publishers, by Faulkner from 5, Howells from 4, etc. American classics, as a matter of fact, are now available in every important country in the world and in the language of the country. One need not be unduly suspicious to see here a pattern for boondoggling in books.

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THE APPARATUS: A word used mainly among the cognoscenti with special meaning is creeping into common usage; the word is "apparatus". Sometimes it is used in reference to the Communist spy system, and thus it is surcharged with esoteric value.

The "apparatus" may not, however, be either Communistic in ideology or surreptitious in method. It is any organized movement to influence thought by pressure techniques. The propaganda machinery of the Federal Government is an apparatus, and so is a "write your Congressman" campaign. It may be a well-financed and complicated "apparatus"; it may be an inconsequential lobby.

Recently, we came into direct contact with the "educational" apparatus. The Saturday Evening Post ran an article by Frank Chodorov, our associate editor, entitled "Educators Should Be Warned by the Pasadena Revolt". The point of the article was that in their defense of "progressive" education and the Pasadena school superintendent who was ousted by popular demand, the proponents were going too far; they were pressing the "expertise" argument to limits the American public would not take. That is, they were saying outright or by inference that public interference in the management of schools was an invasion of the prerogatives of experts.

The apparatus went to work. The National Education Association, standard bearer of the "progressive" line, alerted its membership to the danger of this attack on their ideology, and (we understand) the Post was deluged with letters -- long letters, short letters, abusive ones and some that were slightly threatening. Last reports, both the Post and Mr. Chodorov are holding their ground.

This incident gave us a thought -- the individualist is without an apparatus. It is a method that is inconsistent with his philosophy. He believes in spontaneous and voluntary cooperation, abhors the directed kind. In the long run, his method may well be sounder and more lasting in effect. The question is, will he be around in the long run? Will the apparatus crush him?

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THE GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS: Leave it to the Vermonters. For them the American Revolution never will end. They have a state withholding tax up there and, by golly, they're going to have the law on all employers who do not comply -- and that includes the United States Government. The U.S. Treasury has always insisted that the Montpelier authorities collect and turn over Federal income taxes from state employees. The Vermonters, in turn, demanded that the Federal government collect and turn over the income taxes due the state from resident Federal employees.

The U.S. Treasury said they couldn't do that, had no authorization. All right, sez the Vermonters, until you get such authority, we'll just impound what we collect from the Federal boys who enjoy the hospitality of this state of ours. Fact is -- they have upwards of $200,000 in Montpelier that Washington needs.

In a way, Vermont is doing exactly what Vivien Kellems and the rebels of Marshall, Texas, have done. Those ladies also refused to collect taxes from their employees for the Federal Government. In the case of Miss Kellems, the Federal Government appropriated her bank account -- illegally, as the court later decreed. Latest reports are that the Treasury polizei are trying to grab and impound property of all the lady rebels of Texas, or maybe put them in jail. Question: Will Washington grab the State of Vermont and put it up for sale, to satisfy its tax lien?

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The views expressed in this EUROPEAN SUPPLEMENT *are those of an experienced European observer, and are interesting for that reason, but they do not necessarily reflect the views of HUMAN EVENTS—Editors.*

By BERTRAND DE JOUVENAL Paris — August, 1951

The Advantage of Being Nice: Have the men in the Kremlin made a decision to alter their tactics towards the West? Some careful readers of signs think the available evidence points that way. Events may give them the lie. But their surmise is not improbable: it would certainly be to the advantage of the Kremlin's unrelenting purpose to adopt a new attitude of "niceness".

We liberals are prone to believe that despots manage their affairs more cleverly than we do our own. This diffidence may be unjustified. In the last few years the diplomacy of Soviet Russia and the policy of the dependent Communist parties has been inept. Stalinian leadership has stupidly thrown away a formidable political asset: the label of "goodness". Both Soviet Russia and Communists in Western lands have come to be regarded as "good", in consequence of Hitler's war. The part played by the Russian armies in the war and by the Communists in the Resistance had placed them among the most deserving champions of the common cause.

All that had gone before was forgotten. It was forgotten that Stalin had made Hitler's war possible. (See Leon Blum's articles of 1939. Thus, in one of them on the 21st of September: "I am convinced to the core of my mind that the signature of the tripartite pact, *i.e., with England and France,* would have made war impossible or highly improbable, that the signature of the German-Soviet pact made it almost inevitable . . . Stalin destroyed the one, signed the other: enough to pass judgment.")

It was forgotten that the Russian armies had stabbed Poland in the back, had wantonly attacked Finland; that Soviet Russia had been branded as an aggressor by the League of Nations; that on the very morrow of an alliance with Yugoslavia, it had failed to respond to that country's call for help; that it had attempted everything to get on with Hitler. But all this had fallen into oblivion in 1945.

The Russian soldiers were, not undeservedly, war heroes. Soviet Russia was, fantastically, "the other great democracy". The Communists of Western Europe were "our dear comrades of the Resistance". Therefore it seemed natural that Russia should share world leadership with the U. S., that the Communist parties should be important partners in the government of the liberated European countries. Soviet Russia and the Communists were then so much in fashion that anyone who dared to warn against them was immediately suspect of being an enemy of freedom!

Stalinism reaped enormous advantages from this position. It thereupon started to challenge by its behavior all the ethical principles of the West.

As a result, "the great oriental democracy" is now regarded throughout the West as an imperialist menace. "Our Communist friends" are now distrusted as the servants of a sinister purpose. The West has understood its peril and is meeting the challenge. Confronted with this awakening, the Kremlin had the choice of two policies: war before the West got into shape, or taking a soft line to soften up the Western coalition.

It is a proof of Kremlin stupidity that it has driven the West to do the two things which are most adverse to Russian interests and which the West itself has been unwilling to do: the rebuilding of German and Japanese strength. I have little doubt that the Kremlin leaders are by now deeply worried, and are bent on stopping the process which their own actions and attitudes initiated. But their diplomacy is hampered because they have lost the status of a friendly power, and their men in Western countries have lost the influential status of fellow democrats.

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It now makes sense to try to win back a say-so in diplomatic settlements and in the political decisions of the several nations. This is the counsel of prudence as against the counsel of rage: war. Since the Russians let the most favorable times for war slip by, recourse to war seems illogical; and the situation demands the tactics of the soft approach. How the American public will react to these tactics is one problem: my problem is to judge their possible effect on European opinion.

* * *

European Response to a New Line: When I speak of a new Stalinian attitude, obviously I do not mean the sort of peace campaign Russia has ceaselessly waged, the Stockholm-type. This is an attempt to win people to the idea of Soviet peacefulness and American warlikeness by direct approach. It is known in Bolshevist tactics as "action at the base", or gnawing away the following of opposing political machines or apparatuses. Such "pure" behavior, as Bolshevism calls it, has had some success, but it has reached its limits.

As against this "pure" method, is the "impure" but more profitable one of compromise with enemy machines and apparatuses, such as the Popular Front, the National Front and so on. In this case the Communist party works in apparent good faith with other parties, the Soviet government adopts an attitude of democratic cooperation. This policy is what I have in mind. My guess is that it will score great successes in Europe, and I offer my reasons for this guess.

First, such is the fear of war in countries which have experienced its presence—a fear enhanced by graphic reports from Korea—that the people would be actually grateful to Russia for even a temporary removal of this threat.

Secondly, it is not to be denied that rearmament is unpopular. At least on the Continent, the governments seem so resigned to its unpopularity that they make no attempt to arouse the public to its necessity and choose rather to pursue it in silence and secrecy. In the French press, for instance, you will find next to no mention of Eisenhowerian activities. Even ruling teams are very half-hearted about rearmament. They damn it as a perturbing factor. It unsettles their budgets where the costs of social security and of nationalized enterprise have taken the place formerly occupied by national defence. In their opinion rearmament can only be achieved at the expense of the standard of living, because their picture of the national economy is fundamentally static; they do not think in terms of an expanding economy, capable of producing guns as well as butter. They would be very thankful for a chance to "slow up" rearmament, *i.e.*, forget about it.

Thirdly, public opinion resents the dependence of European nations upon the United States. I meet every day with new instances of Americaphobia in the intellectual and bourgeois classes, and the reasons given for the dislike are so silly that it is obviously a waste of time to meet them with rational argument; the reasoning is patently the intellectual scum thrown up by an emotional attitude. Nor can this emotional attitude be related to patronizing advice and impatient prodding accompanying American aid. It is the relationship itself which antagonizes Europeans; their being helped and protected is annoying. The pauperized elder brother finds compensation by scoffing and complaining. It is the psychology of resentment.

I have little doubt that European opinion, even at the top level, would eagerly respond to a Russian attitude which made war improbable, rearmament apparently unnecessary, and seemed to remove the need for American help and protection. Nor is this all. The Communist parties in Western Europe now stand isolated, quarantined, without any part in the effective political life of the several countries. There are many who would be glad to welcome them back as active partners, and would seize the occasion of a change of attitude on the part of Communists. Why is that?

Wherever the Communists have made deep inroads in the working class, as in France and Italy, and stand beyond the pale, the net effect is to weaken the Left within the anti-Communist majority. It

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is as if in the United States half the Democratic voters turned to a Communist Party: the Republicans therefore would be safely in the saddle. The rump Democrats would presumably try to batter down the Communist Party: if they failed in this, some at least might feel that, given a reassuring attitude of the Communists, an alliance would be desirable. The supposition is quite improbable, and I offer it only to bring out the mechanics of the situation.

It is important to realize that the greater the Communist vote the more the political center of gravity moves to the Right, given the exclusion of Communists. Were it not for the parallel Gaullist opposition in France, we would have here a government of the Right, just as in Italy.

The moving of the political center of gravity to the Right causes a restlessness of the Leftist elements in the anti-Communist majority. The Socialists and their supporters chafe at the swing to economic liberalism: the more pronounced it is, the more they dream of what they might do with Communist support.

Nor is the issue of collectivism and anti-collectivism the only one. A very old issue raises its head in Europe: the religious issue. As it is not well known in the States, it deserves a paragraph by itself.

* * *

The Religious Issue: It is well known that the Stalinians have sought to use the essentially Catholic character of the Bonn government to excite Protestant opposition. The spiritual distance between Catholicism and Protestantism is too slight and the distance between Protestantism and the State religion of Communism is far too great to promise any important results. A far more promising situation obtains where the population is not divided between several Christian faiths but between Catholicism and militant disbelief. This is the case on the whole western rim of Europe: Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, but chiefly France.

There the antagonism between believers and unbelievers has historically provided a major line of political cleavage. It is only quite recently that the line of cleavage has come to run in terms of economic and social policies (allowing the Catholic M.R.P. leaders to qualify as *leftists*). The religious line is an incipient possibility which it is very much to the Communist interest to revive. Education is for this purpose an ideal ground.

It was a main purpose of the French Revolution in its Jacobin stage to "destroy superstition", and the vast network of ecclesiatical schools then in existence was dashed to the ground. Robespierre wished to set up a State monopoly of education. This has been the constant purpose of the Left ever since. Greece was endlessly cited as a perfect example of "education for the City", all children receiving the same instruction so as to make them equal and faithful citizens. Napoleon implemented Robespierre's dream by creating "*The* University", with sole direction of education. His authoritarian conception, with a few setbacks, has reigned ever since.

It is significant that the Minister of National Education in France is called "the grand master of the University". From his office go forth the detailed programs which all teachers of all grades must adhere to, and it is commonly said that all Frenchmen of the same age learn precisely the same things at the same hours. The system which at its inception applied in practice only to higher and secondary education has in the course of time embraced the elementary grades.

A most praiseworthy effort has been made to extend the benefit of education to the greatest possible number of children though we lag far far behind the U.S., and to make education quite free of cost. But this education is a channel, as Robespierre and Napoleon had meant it, to propagate a certain ideology. When we say that it is *laique* or lay, an American naturally understands that it is a-denominational. This, however, does not fully describe it. Especially in the elementary grades, it is aggressively antireligious and conveys a positivist view of the Universe.

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Moreover, even if the monopoly of education could not be put in practice at the time it was enacted into law (1806), and has since then ceased to be law, it remains an ideal of Leftists, who have served it by forcible suppression of the main religious establishments (as in the law of 1904). These, however, always revive, and there is now a question before the French Parliament: whether Catholic taxpayers who pay for the support of State schools are not entitled to some subsidy in favor of the schools to which they send their children.

The question is one of burning economic urgency as the teachers of free schools are now paid as little as 35 dollars a month, far less than the minimum wage. Chairs in Catholic colleges carry an honorarium of 70 dollars. Suggestions to help the "free schools" as they are called (the great majority are Catholic; there are some outstanding Protestant institutions and again some others have no religious affiliations) arouse a storm of protest among those who call themselves *laiques*. This offers the Communists the promising possibility of reconstituting a "front of laicity", or an alliance of those elements which constituted the Popular Front: Communists, Socialists, and Radicals. While in an alliance on social grounds they have looked to Catholic M.R.P., on grounds of laicity they can look to the Radicals, the traditional party of the antireligious battle.

Most observers regard this as a minor affair. It is not so. True alliances are grounded in a community of fundamental beliefs. While the Communists have derived considerable advantage from their argument to Christians that there was between Communism and Christianity a common repudiation of Mammon, a common concern for the social underdog, this alliance naturally finds its limits. There is far more profit to be gotten from working with groups which in common with Bolshevism reject Christianity. While the non-Christian ethics in France have been for a long time mainly influenced by Rousseau and Kant, guides which could not but lead to the clearest rejection of Marxism, more recently they have come under very different influences; Durkheim and others whose fundamental philosophy offers no basic obstacle to the acceptance of the Marxist viewpoint.

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Communist Chances: Academic and intellectual circles in Western Europe are at present on the whole estranged from Stalinism proper. But I am afraid there is great readiness to cooperate with something which would not be Stalinism as it has shown itself in the last few years. The main reasons for it are: *one*, grave dissatisfaction with "Society as it is"; *two*, a sentimental urge to stand with the people; *three*, a far-reaching influence of Marxism as an intellectual system. It is amazing to find how deeply Marxism has penetrated into the thoughts of non-Marxists. This one senses on reading the many intellectual monthlies which are a feature of French life and on seeing how readily and unwittingly writers accent Marxist premises or interpretations. Or, again, I was amazed a few days ago, spending a morning in a university bookshop, to find how many of the publications displayed revealed more or less direct Marxist influence.

Certainly the Communists still have a card to play in Continental Western Europe. They have only to lay down their bludgeon. The question is whether they can.

It is certainly surprising, in view of the fact that all their successes were won as partners in the democratic process, that they should have broken this partnership to their disadvantage. Is this due to the fear that their troops shall be contaminated? Or has it even more fundamental reasons? Is it perhaps that they are dupes of their own creed, that they believe in the Machiavellianism of "Capital" and that they are in danger of being tricked by those they have found it so easy to trick? Their isolation is so obviously unprofitable to them that I find it difficult not to think they will find that out, or have indeed found it out, and shall act upon this finding, or perhaps are acting upon it. If they do, they may well force back lucid anti-Communists into an uneasy defensive.

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